

Peaceful transition of power our tradition, declares PM

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The peaceful handing over of power as per the due process after the results of popular democratic elections is the norm in Malaysia, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said today.

"We have had 12 general elections since independence and all were conducted within the scheduling set by our constitution.

"The transition of power as the result of elections have been conducted peacefully. This is our tradition," the prime minister said in his opening speech at a law conference in Kuala Lumpur today.

This, said Najib, is because to the ruling coalition, "maintaining peace is paramount".

His statement comes on the footsteps of allegations by the opposition that the BN is hell bent on doing whatever it can to stay in power.

Recently, senior opposition politician Lim Kit Siang challenged Najib to guarantee that the BN would hand over power peacefully if it loses the 13th general election, which must be held by June this year.

In his speech, Najib also defended legislation that challenges personal liberties as necessary measures, for our forefathers were "forced" to address crisis that threaten racial harmony in the framework of ensuring national peace.

Even so, he said that "core democratic values" were left untouched despite such necessities.

He also warned that while our social integration "can be said to be strong, it can still be threatened" and societal safety must outweigh personal freedoms.

However, Najib conceded that the government shall listen to the voice of the people and will constantly amend and repeal outdated laws and draft more amenable ones as per current requirements.

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